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Fig. 33. Meeting House in Nschûggebot (Ojek Family), Spanish Guinea, with Decorative Boards of Bark.

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covered with charcoal drawings on the inside between the raffia boards. At this point, however, I cannot go into this art work in any greater detail (see Section 9, "Fine Arts").

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If it were not for the people who enliven the house with their handicrafts and activities, /Fig. 32 appears here in the original text/ if the flaring fire did not lend the large, dark rooms a special, almost mysterious quality -- it would be too dreary. It is precisely here that one notices how everywhere only pulsating life, man in his sad and in his happy hours, not the material environment, is capable of attracting us. The same room which we disposed of just now with a disparaging glance is capable of creating a totally different impression in the evenings when the men and young /69/ /Fig. 33 appears here in the original text/ people gradually congregate in the meeting house in order to listen to the old, hunchbacked Njema-Ndongo tell of the mysterious and uncanny creatures of the fabulous world. Indefatigably they listen, however long he may spin out his yarn, motionless they look at him as he restlessly rubs his hands over the fire, wags his finger threateningly, separates or pushes aside the logs when the

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Fig. 34. Dwelling in Makonanám (Ojek Family), Spanish Guinea.

344 fire gets too hot for him, and wards off the smoke from his face
517 like a person gently but firmly sending a little child away! He
538 looks as though he is talking to the fire and delivering a speech to the logs. Everybody listens in silence, everybody hangs on his words. And then follows a deliberate pause, after which he begins anew with impressive intonation; and at familiar places all the listeners enter into the narrative with a brief choral song in response to the solo part of the old man. Or there may be a
514 bit of gossip to relate, with a hubbub of biting words, an oc-
517 casion for spontaneous gaiety to prevail. On yet another oc-
521 casion a performance by a famous xylophone artist will draw
533 the population to the meeting house. The entire village, women and children included, takes part in these recitals; the children beat out the rhythm with small pieces of wood, while the women, with great dignity, beat together groundnuts and ngon which represent the "fee" and, softly humming a refrain, cast a meaningful glance in the direction of the tireless player.

342 The dwelling (ndǎ; plural, mandǎ), Figure 34, like the meeting house, /70/ /Fig. 34 appears here in the original text/ has a gabled roof and a rectangular ground plan. Like meeting houses, dwellings have both temporary and permanent forms.

285 415 strands are placed like hooks around its outside edge, and they are fastened to it with Triumfetta bast or a string.

Depending on their size, the basketwork plates have various names. The small ones are called fá III Fang (a, b), the somewhat larger ones ovǒk, the ordinary large ones dzǎ̀d, niǎ̀ dzǎ̀d = real, true basketwork plates (c).

Concerning their use, see page 137.

(8) Belts (bab IV).

283 These are braided from a number of superimposed strips of Ancistrophyllum (nkâne) interwoven with bush rope Oncocalamus. (see "Dress and Ornaments," page 166).

3. Woodworking.

322 517 532 Despite the considerable importance accorded to it in the Pangwe household, wood carving has remained on a comparatively low level of development and bears no comparison with the achievements of other primitive peoples, such as the Melanesians. Its forms display a certain sober utilitarianism, a stiffness and uniformity from which all movement and playfulness are excluded. Only rarely does it rise to the level of representational sculpture. Representations of whole human beings are to be found primarily in the ancestral figures, rarely on chiefs' sticks; heads, moreover, are to be seen only on the posts of meeting houses (seen only in one case), on bench posts in the meeting house, in the memory game, and in the masks used for the moon cult (Sso).

322 The number of objects made of wood is very large, as will be apparent from the list that follows:

1. Digging sticks
2. Shovels
3. Hoe and axe handles
4. Posts for the meeting house
5. Bench posts for the meeting house

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1. This lack is also pointed out by Balandier, op. cit., p. 544.

A careful study of village names in several subdivisions has not turned up a name that seems connected with ideas of market, exchange, or trade. Moreover, vocabularies for such subjects are very limited.

And, into this land so unprepared for an economic /sic/ life, world economy is penetrating with all its complexity, setting a purchase price for the total output, which has fluctuations the planters obviously cannot understand. Their dismay is natural, since they have not even been able to become familiar with ideas about price, demand, or bargaining through traditions of trade.

It goes without saying that the time when salt was the item most in demand is long since past. However, bags of salt appear among traditional wedding presents, and the manufacture of salt from lye-washed palm ash is still known, though the product is only sold — and moreover very rarely — for its medicinal properties.

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Expenditures have become extremely diversified, as shown by the analysis of an average family budget: (2)

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2. These figures drawn from Budgets familiaux au Cameroun /Family Budgets in the Cameroons/, p. 150, do not take into account, we must remember, auto consumption.

Food	14 percent	Household articles	1.9 percent
Textiles	17.4 -	Equipment	7.7 -
Bride price	13 -	Taxes	8.5 -
Housing and furniture	7.5 -	Medicaments	1.3 -
Bedding	1.5 -	Education	0.9 -
Lighting and upkeep	3 -	Gifts and miscellaneous	6 -
Trips	2 -		

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Food now includes, even in the bush, imported items like stockfish or like the bread, sardines, sugar, and condensed milk that are used less regularly. Clothes are the main item of expense. The desire to follow Paris fashions is perhaps not a national trait peculiar

to Pahouin women, but it is certainly a geographical characteristic of the southern Cameroons, consequently, the textiles for sale are to a great extent those sold in Europe. Specifically African prints, such as "wax-prints," are dying out. Underclothes, stockings, and shoes reflect the sophistication that goes with wealth. The purchase of durable goods that go under the heading "Equipment," (bicycles, phonographs, pressure lamps) is another symptom, as is the changing demand for household articles. /35/ While the saucepan is still the basic kitchen utensil, enamelware is in strong competition with crockery and glass. Blankets are used everywhere, but the use of sheets is also on the increase.

A mere list of commodities shows the present-day importance of trade. The native populations have not always realized this, owing to their lack of inclination for it. They have not started businesses and have often left this to immigrants, coastal people long familiar with European ways, particularly the Bamiléké or "Haoussa," /Hausa/ who for their part have a solid trading tradition and great capacities in this field. The Boulou especially despise trade and refuse to have anything to do with it. Other Pahouin peoples are not so strongly antipathetic, but their business activity remains very limited.

Is it this bankruptcy on the part of the indigenous people and this taking over by "foreigners" which explains the organization and the location of trade in the region? The villages are in fact very badly served; markets are few and far between and so are rural shops. Perhaps we ought to note differences between the various Pahouin and Pahouinized groups. While a village trader is always most uncommon in Boulou country in spite of the relative affluence of the planters, he is not unknown in Ewondo districts and is quite often to be met with among the Eton, where resources are, nevertheless, more limited. Without local trade the collecting of crops and specifically of cacao posed quite a problem, to which the coming of buyers brought a solution. Business houses advance money to the buyers and buy what they are able to bring back. From hut to hut along the trails buyers negotiate purchases with planters. With these "purchases by peddling" it might seem logical for sales by peddling to develop. Yet this phenomenon is quite recent, being tied up with the development of transportation by car and bicycle. But while the buyers are generally native to the region, the pedlars are nearly always foreign.

As house-to-house buying creates countless disadvantages, the administration has endeavored to create rural markets so that the public

779 necessary investigation by sacrifices. And the totem, under
622 penalty of not receiving any expiation, should reveal its rela-
614 tionship. But as Nzoge Nze becomes more of a remote ancestor, the risk of relationship with every panther grows, for each panther may be related to the eponymous ancestor and consequently the law becomes more stringent. Should a panther enter villages and kill a few innocent people, [549] such as women and children, The men of the eponymous clan would be permitted to kill it, and only in such a case, but they would still be forbidden to eat it. When after a series of sacrifices for this purpose, it has been duly established that revenge for some unexpiated totemic offense is not involved, that is proof that the panther in question does not belong to the eponymous panther clan. It is a "foreigner" or "deserter", the latter being quite common in certain animal species, one of whose members may leave the group to go off on his own and become a "solitary," as do elephants, panthers, wild boars, gorillas. It is then perfectly lawful to attack it and kill it if possible. A trifling ritual expiation will suffice, proportionate to the very small likelihood of having killed an ally, an extremely slight probability, since actions are never taken without previous assent of the totem chief of the tribe. The responsibility will be his in case of mistake.

IV. War and Palavers

511 Life is easy for the Fan.

Close to his village, the great forest begins; it abounds in game, and he has not far to go to be able to shoot, at point-blank range, monkeys, antelopes, wild boars, even elephants. There are innumerable streams and rivers swarming with fish, especially carp; traps, weirs, nets, everything is good to catch them with -- everything succeeds. A Fan hunts and fishes when he feels like it; there are no laws interfering with his inclinations. Banana and manioc plantations, which provide the basic subsistence, give hardly any trouble. At the start of each season there are a few days of work at slashing-and-burning, the ashes providing fertilizer. After that, all the labor and care of the crops falls
• 517 upon the women. The Fan is therefore idle most of the day and

517 from this comes about the endless palavers about everything and nothing, for lack of anything else to do.

721 However, if for one reason or another war threatens the tribe or has to be declared, the Fan then seems to awaken from his lethargy. Before the decision to fight, [550] there must be lengthy palavers. The totem has but a small part in these palavers, but no warrior would put in his word without having first taken his totem in hand and given it a brief scolding, often just one word, an exclamation, which only the most attentive would hear.

721 637 When all the warriors have had their say, the chief rises and sums up everything that has been said, before beginning his own speech. During this report, he usually remains at his place. He then goes to the middle of the assembly, his chief's baton in his hand and across his chest the baldrick from which the akaméyòn always hangs. "I am so-and-so," he begins, "son of so-and-so, and my father was chief of the race. We are the sons of such-and-such totem, and our akaméyòn protects us." After [201] these words, he stamps on the ground with his foot, or more often, with his baton, as if to testify to the truth of what he has said, and then gives his own opinion. When he has finished he holds up the tribal totem to bear witness to his words, then returns to his place.

TT 721 782 If war is declared the totemic ceremonies are more pronounced. At first they will be nearly like those described for the initiation and consecration of the chief. The same altar is put up in the forest with the same rites; wood of the éfirfira is again used for construction. On the appointed day, all the warriors make their way into the forest, each head of a family carrying his évora biéri. The skulls are set out on the altar, and each totem at its place. The victim is then brought forward.

The scene at this point changes completely. Neither a dog nor a kid is immolated -- it must always be a man, either a prisoner of war or some captive bought back from a neighboring tribe. A woman may never replace a man. Nor may a man or child belonging to the tribe, nor one whose mother belonged either to the tribe or to an allied tribe, be used as victim; for

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

bread-winners and some are strong and muscular, while many more are weak and worn out from ceaseless toil.

The Fang make good carriers, and will do a splendid day's journey even in the wet season with bad forest trails, if not overloaded. A carrier's load should never exceed 25 kilogrammes; and 20 would pay better on a long journey. The first day out with a caravan the men usually drag along slowly, until their loads settle well down in the *kingi* and fit their backs. The *kingi* is a very ingenious contrivance for carrying a load in; it is usually made from a forest vine with a plaited head strap. To hurry carriers the first day is a bad mistake; poorly adjusted loads chafe and cause sore backs, and before night the whole caravan is tired out and sulky. It is a wise traveller in Africa as elsewhere who knows how to save his men.

A very noticeable fact among the Fang is the scarcity of old men. I attribute this largely to the ravages of syphilis; the same terrible disease that has done so much towards the degeneration of numerous coast tribes, and which is already playing fearful havoc among the Fang. Indolent, untrustworthy and warlike, they are nevertheless a most companionable people. The slightest piece of drollery or a joke immediately causes laughter. It has been my privilege to visit many foreign lands including China, Japan and Korea, yet never in my life have I met such an absolutely good-natured, fun-loving people as the Fang.

The men are not fond of work. They frequently ask me for something to do to "earn a cloth." If I tell them to cut fence poles or good clean bark in the forest, they decline. A male Fang's idea of work is to sit in the *Abeng* (= palaver house) and make fish lines by rolling pineapple fibre along the upper portion of his thigh, or to manufacture *Abi* (roof thatch). At these occupations he can converse with all comers, hear the news and take his part in talking a palaver. They are a revengeful people and will keep up a palaver over a woman for many years. If they do not succeed in shooting a man during a palaver they do not hesitate to fire at and kill a woman, while captives held as hostages are often treated with great cruelty.

The women regard virtue very lightly. Before marriage a girl can do nearly as she pleases. It is absolutely safe to state that it would be almost impossible to find a maiden in a Fang village over sixteen years of age. Adultery is common, and one of the chief causes of "women palavers." Women rank first in value as goods for trade, next in value are goats, then guns and cloth. The greed for goods has a strong hold on the people. They learn quickly but have very little originality. They have no obscene rites. Their habits are very dirty; they will wash in a small pool of water and, while bathing, fill the gourds or imported jugs with the water in which they are washing and use it for domestic purposes. In many other ways they are absolutely filthy, and descend to the level of brute creation. They are not over-burdened with modesty, both sexes frequently bathe together in a perfectly nude condition. A male Fang passes a large percentage of his time in

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

the palaver house, where he loves to sit and gossip around the log fire, or lounge on the *Ewong* (a native bed of poles). 517

Dancing is a favourite pastime, especially at the time of new moon, when the dance seems to have some religious significance. A Fang dance is a sight worth seeing; arrayed in long streaming armlets of dried grass, and large bunches of forest beans and molluscs shells tied around the ankles for castanets, they go through a series of rapid and graceful movements, some of which are not entirely free from obscenity. Flaming torches made of resin wrapped in plantain leaves are stuck in the ground and the drums keep up a perfect fusillade; the whole making a weird and extremely interesting spectacle. With short intervals of rest the dance usually continues throughout the night until daybreak (photo of dance shown on screen). 535 [573]

III.—*Clothing, Ornaments, Painting and Tattooing.*

Fang men and women usually go about bareheaded; some obtain imported straw and felt hats from the traders and are very proud of them. A red worsted night-cap sold at the factories is very popular and much worn. These head coverings are chiefly worn for ornament and not to afford protection from the sun or weather. Until the opening up of trade among the Fang people their clothing amounted to almost nothing. The men wore a waist cloth made of bark from certain trees, a strong, tough, fibrous material, and the women wore a girdle stripped from the plantain stem, with some leaves from the bush or a piece of the plantain leaf tucked through the girdle in front and passed downward, backward and upward between the limbs and fastened to the girdle behind. Very often the women wore a kind of bustle made of dried grass dyed black, or red. In sitting down the women are very careful to first arrange the bustle. The native bark cloth, the girdle and bustle, are still worn in the bush towns; the women often make the girdle of imported glass beads strung on string made from pineapple fibre, but people living in towns along the river banks wear imported cloths obtained in trade. As a general rule boys and girls run about without clothing until five or six years of age. Imported cloth is worn by both sexes and is often sewn together very skilfully and decorated with pieces of different colours. There are no recognised peculiarities of dress restricted to the subdivision of tribes. The cloth is cut out and sewed by each individual owner unless it is a trade cloth previously sewn. Cloth is usually hemmed and worn as a simple wrapper around the waist, and held in place by rolling in and tucking the upper border on itself. The upper portion of the body is not much covered by the cloth although some men and women wear it tied high up around the neck. There is no difference between the indoor and outdoor clothing. When imported needles and thread can be obtained they are used, but I have seen very skilful sewing done with a sharp piece of bamboo for a needle and thread made of pineapple fibre. Upon the death of parents, clothes descend to the children. In saluting a visitor it is not customary to remove a hat or cap, if one is being worn, or any other article of clothing. 291 [516] [369] [428] [576]